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TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 3815  
INFO RUEHRC/AMCONSUL RECIFE 9253  
RUEHSD/AMCONSUL SAO PAULO 3734  
RUEHRI/AMCONSUL RIO DE JANEIRO 7445  
RUEHAC/AMEMBASSY ASUNCION 7445  
RUEHBU/AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES 6148  
RUEHGT/AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA 0364  
RUEHLP/AMEMBASSY LA PAZ 6849  
RUEHPE/AMEMBASSY LIMA 4156  
RUEHME/AMEMBASSY MEXICO 2135  
RUEHTG/AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA 0151  
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UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 BRASILIA 000331

SENSITIVE  
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SUBJECT: ADDITIONAL COMMENT ON DOL DRAFT LIST FOR TVPRA

REFS: A. BRASILIA 124, B. CHARITA CASTRO EMAIL TO PRINCE AND TINSLEY, FEBRUARY 24, 2009, C. STATE 3075

¶1. (SBU) In ref A, Post noted that we could not confirm child or forced labor for certain products. At this time we can provide additional information on those products.

¶2. (U) Bananas and Talc: After further research, Mission does not/not believe these should be on the DOL List of Goods because in 2007 and 2008 the Brazilian Ministry of Labor (MTE) did not find a single case of child labor during its inspections. Moreover, in the case of talc, the child labor that was discovered in Ouro Preto, Minas Gerais, in 2006 seems to have been an isolated case.

¶3. (U) Bricks: the MTE found 14 cases of child labor in the production of bricks or pottery (labor in "olarias") in the 2007-08 period in several states, and we have seen recent press reports and web sites concerning child labor for bricks and roof tiles, suggesting that child labor may be frequent enough to include bricks and roof tiles on the List of Goods.

¶4. (U) Corn: in the 2007-2008 period, child labor was found at a very low level - the MTE found seven children employed in corn growing in the town of Queimadas, Paraiba state, and a small number of children working at various locations handling corn, wheat, rice, soy, or other grains, making it impossible to state with certainty that children were involved in the production of corn when multiple products were handled. The source materials DOL provided include press materials from 2004 and a report from November 2006 on the Reporter Brasil site regarding a farm in Minas Gerais that produced corn, among many crops. In addition to the MTE statistics, we found on the Reporter Brasil website a report dated November 3, 2008, stating that the MTE found two children under age 15 working in corn production in Maranhao in 2008. There are no other reports of child labor involving corn on the Reporter Brasil site in 2007 or 2008. In view of the very low numbers, we do not believe at this time that corn should be included on the List of Goods.

¶5. (U) Coffee: Mission stated in ref A that an NGO expert on forced labor told us there are very few forced labor cases associated with coffee. We have no new information to add at this time. MTE statistics show that labor inspectors discovered only 45 children in coffee growing in the 2007-2008 period.

¶6. (U) Soybeans: Four children were found in soy cultivation in 2007-2008. (Note: We are not asking to exclude soy beans from the List of Goods at this time because some forced labor has been used. End note.)

¶7. (U) Comment: With regard to corn, coffee and soy beans, the low

numbers almost certainly describe extremely isolated problems. Brazil is the world's third largest corn producer, after the U.S. and China, and the incidence of child labor reported by MTE inspectors must be viewed in this context. In 2007/08, Brazil planted 14.8 million hectares of corn and produced over 58 million tons of corn. In 2008/2009 it is expected to produce 49.5 million tons. Brazil is the world's largest coffee producer, with a 2008 output of 45,992 bags in 2008, more than double the amount of the second producer, Vietnam, and nearly quadruple the amount of the number three producer, Colombia. Brazil is the world's second largest producer and exporter of soybeans (58 million tons produced in 2007; 21.3 million hectares planted in 2007/08), after the U.S. (71 millions tons produced in 2007). The incidence of child labor in these crops is not only isolated but extremely low. Mission does not consider it plausible that a significant problem with child labor is being overlooked in these crops. The child labor inspection findings for them contrast sharply with the case of manioc where MTE inspectors have reported scores, even hundreds, of children producing manioc in the last two years: in the largest such cases in that period, the MTE discovered 482 children in one inspection operation in Maranhao, and 252 in an inspection operation in Pernambuco. End comment.

¶18. (U) Tin: In ref A, Mission identified tin as a product about which we had credible information that child labor may be involved. We have looked at MTE statistics and found only one report, which involved 19 children at a site in Amazonas in July 2008. However, they were all in the 16-17 years of age range, and therefore according to the guidelines in the Federal Register notice this is usually not considered child labor.

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